

*Funding secured by Sen. Leahy and Rep. Welch will support national model for sustainable food delivery and education*

Rep. Peter Welch on Monday announced a \$143,000 federal grant for Fletcher Allen Health Care's Center for Nutrition and Healthy Food Systems.

The federal funding, which was secured by Welch and Sen. Patrick Leahy, will support the integration of local food into patient care and cafeterias at the Burlington hospital. This program will foster partnerships between local farmers and health care institutions throughout Vermont in an effort to provide patients with more nutritious food choices while supporting agriculture in the state.

Welch made the announcement Monday afternoon at the grand opening of FAHC's new sustainable food service facility, the Harvest Café. The café, which will serve locally-produced, organic food, aims to become a national model for health care facilities by reducing energy use and food waste while enhancing recycling and composting programs.

"With the launch of the Harvest Café, Fletcher-Allen is leading the way not only in Vermont but throughout the country in integrating fresh, regional food with patient care. This initiative will promote healthy eating choices, support Vermont farms and create a national model for other health care centers to follow," Rep. Welch said. "I was pleased that Sen. Leahy and I could secure federal funding for this valuable project."

Leahy said, "Once again, Vermont is taking the lead on environmental, agricultural and health issues. From its use of sustainable building materials, locally grown organic food, and even Vermont's cold winter air in its refrigeration system, Fletcher Allen Health Care's Harvest Café is a model that other institutions will follow for decades to come. I was proud to work with Congressman Welch to obtain funding for this innovative and exciting project."